Use of fertilizers

2613. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the States using large quantities of fertilizers are lagging behind in agriculture whereas the States using appropriate quantities of fertilizers have performed very well;

(b) if so, whether Government would provide this information to the farmers so that they don't use excess fertilizers in the fields;

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Fertilizer is an important input in increasing foodgrain production in the country and the present level of consumption of 104.5 kg. per hectare in the country during 2005-06 cannot be considered excessive. The continued mining of nutrients in intensive cropping system in some parts of the country has led to nutrient deficiencies particularly of micro and secondary nutrients. The nutrient deficiencies coupled with falling organic carbon levels have impaired soil health and caused stagnation/decline in the crop productivity in some parts of the country.

(b) to (d) In order to minimize imbalance/excessive use of chemical fertilizers the Government is, accordingly, promoting Integrated Nutrient Management by advocating soil test based balanced and judicious use of chemical fertilizers including secondary nutrients and micro nutrients in conjunction with organic manures and bio-fertilizers. The Government is also educating farmers through training and field demonstrations on balanced use of fertilizers for improving soil fertility and its productivity.

PM's special rehabilitation package

2614. SHRI P.R. RAJAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether steps had been initiated to implement Prime Minister's special rehabilitation package to mitigate agrarian distress of farmers;

(b) if so, the details including the total amount granted and utilized at various heads like farm loans, credit flow, interest on loans, irrigation potential, seed replacement programme, check dam, dairy activity, etc. for last three years, year-wise, State-wise and category-wise;

(c) if so, the number of farmers benefited with above programme for the last three years, year-wise, State-wise and category-wise; and

(d) if so, the number of farmers suicide due to agrarian distress for last five years, year-wise, district-wise, gender-wise and State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid down on the Table of the House.

Second green revolution for pulses

2615. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of a paper compiled by ASSOCHAM which has recommended that second green revolution is called for to produce high yielding variety of pulses to enhance their annual production and to meet their growing demand and to contain rising prices;

(b) if so, whether Government have studied the strategy suggested by the ASSOCHAM and what Government are doing to enhance the production of pulses in the near future; and

(c) the names of the pulses for which high yielding varieties are available in the world and what research has been done in the country to develop the variety of high yielding pulses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) Government is aware of issues highlighted by ASSOCHAM. The strategies such as productivity enhancement, improving the efficiency of resources/inputs, processing and value addition and genomics enabled crop improvement are being implemented for enhancing the production of pulses. Basic, strategic applied and anticipatory research on different aspects of pulses have been strengthened under National Agriculture Innovative Project, Strategic Research Network Projects on Priority Areas and Indo-US Knowledge Initiatives.

Further, with a view to enhancing the production of pulses in the country and achieve self-sufficiency, Government has approved the implementation of National Food Security Mission (NFSM) comprising rice, wheat and pulses in identified states/districts during Eleventh Plan. Area expansion of 4.47 million ha through intercropping and utilization of rice fallows and productivity enhancement have been targeted during Eleventh Five Year Plan under NFSM - Pulses.

In order to develop high yielding varieties of pulses, research on improved plant type, multiple disease resistance, biotic and abiotic stresses, genomics enabled pulses improvement transgenic for gram pod borer in chickpea and pigeonpea and CMS based hybrids in pigeonpea, introgression of genes from wild relatives and widening of genetic base of improved varieties is under way.